

The Fort McHenry Tunnel

A Toll Facility Of The Maryland Transportation Authority

The Fort McHenry Tunnel is the newest of the Maryland Transportation Authority's toll facilities. The opening of the facility during the early morning hours of Nov. 24, 1985, was a milestone in many ways. The tunnel is the final link in the Northeast corridor's most important interstate route, Interstate 95. It also is the largest, underwater highway tunnel, as well as the widest vehicular tunnel ever built by the immersed-tube method. The tunnel is one of seven toll facilities operated and maintained by the Maryland Transportation Authority.

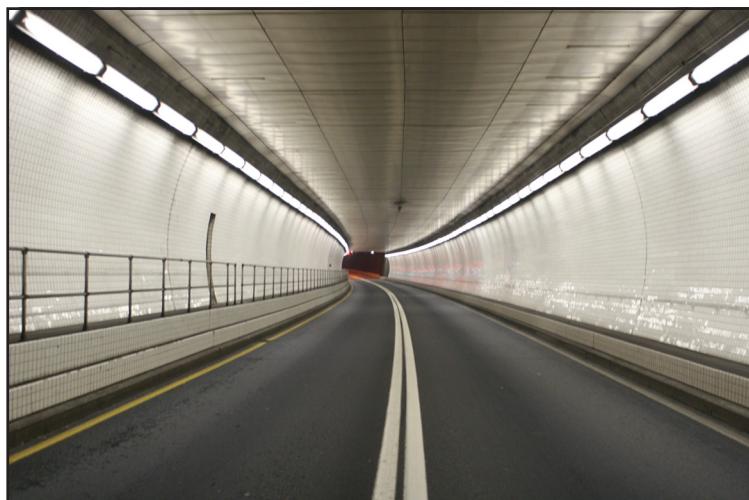
In addition to being a vital portion of Interstate 95, the Fort McHenry Tunnel joins the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel (Interstate 895) and the Francis Scott Key Bridge (Interstate 695) in a network of Baltimore Harbor crossings that provides convenient and safe transportation for local and interstate traffic.

The challenges of building an eight-lane tunnel nearly two miles long were immense.

Remarkably, the project was completed on time and below the proposed \$825-million budget.

Original plans called for an eight-lane bridge across the Baltimore Harbor to complete the final segment of Interstate 95. However, a bridge would have had a negative environmental and aesthetic impact on the nearby National Monument and Historic Site at Fort McHenry and the neighboring residential community of Locust Point. A 1.7-mile tunnel was proposed as an alternative.

The tunnel extends from the Locust Point peninsula, passes south of Fort McHenry



under the harbor navigational channel and rises to grade in the Canton industrial area of Southeast

Baltimore. The toll plaza is located on the Canton side, south of the harbor.

The alignment near Fort McHenry and below the shipping channel required the design of the world's first tunnel sections that curved both vertically and horizontally. The tunnel sections were manu-

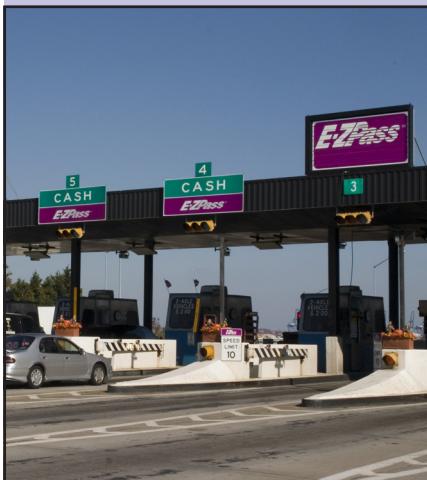
factured in Port Deposit, MD, and were floated to the site using tug boats.

The tunnel was built using the open-trench method, in which prefabricated tunnel sections were sunk in a trench dredged in the harbor's bottom, and the sections were joined underwater.

A dredge-disposal site for materials removed from the tunnel trench was created at nearby Canton/Seagirt. The resulting 136 usable acres were developed later by the Authority. The result was the Seagirt Marine Terminal, which opened for business in 1990. Operated by the Maryland Port Administra-



Background (continued)



More than 43.4 million vehicles traveled through the Fort McHenry Tunnel in Fiscal Year 2009.

About the Authority

Fort McHenry Tunnel (I-95)

Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge (US 301)

Francis Scott Key Bridge (I-695)

Baltimore Harbor Tunnel (I-895)

Thomas J. Hatem Memorial Bridge (US 40)

John F. Kennedy Memorial Highway (I-95)

William Preston Lane Jr. Memorial (Bay) Bridge (US 50/301)

tion under a lease with the Authority, this Baltimore marine-terminal facility is the most modern of its type in the country, with state-of-the-art container cranes that dramatically reduce the time vessels spend in port.

The construction of the Fort McHenry Tunnel required the precise coordination of 11 prime contracts. These included work for the tunnel and approach-roadway designs; trench dredging; tube fabrication; construction of the ventilation and administration buildings and toll plaza; and roadway paving and landscaping.

The Transportation Authority also maintains the tunnel's approach roadways from Caton Avenue on the south side to the northern Baltimore City line, including Interstate 395 into Baltimore's Inner Harbor area.

The 1.5-mile, eight-lane tunnel handles a daily traffic volume of more than 115,000 vehicles. During Fiscal Year 2009, more than 43.4 million vehicles used the facility.

The Maryland Transportation Authority is an independent State agency that finances, owns and operates the State's seven toll facilities. The Authority's eight Members, appointed by the Governor with consent of the State Senate, serve as the agency's policy-setting and governing body. Maryland's Secretary of Transportation serves as Authority Chairman.

Daily operations of the seven facilities are carried out by the Authority's 1,700 employees. Overall management of Authority operations is handled by the agency's Executive Secretary.

The Transportation Authority oversees the State's seven toll facilities and the Maryland Transportation Authority Police. The agency has statutory authority to act on behalf of the Maryland Department of Transportation to supervise, finance, construct, operate and maintain transportation facilities.

Maryland's toll facilities were financed and constructed through revenue bonds. The outstanding principal and interest due each year is paid from toll revenues. Toll revenues are the primary source of funds. The Authority's toll receipts are pooled, and revenues from all seven facilities are combined to pay for operating, maintaining and making capital improvements to these facilities.

A Commitment to Safety

The Maryland Transportation Authority Police is a nationally accredited force with more than 600 sworn and civilian employees. Specialized K-9, motorcycle, all-terrain-vehicle, marine and anti-aggressive-driving units help provide maximum safety and security at Authority facilities, the Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport and the Port of Baltimore. To maintain the highest level of professionalism and ethics, Transportation Authority Police officers remain true to their mission of safeguarding life and property, preserving peace, preventing and detecting crime, enforcing the law and protecting the rights of citizens.

The force has received local and national recognition for its roadway-safety efforts, which include child-passenger-safety awareness programs, anti-aggressive-driving initiatives and sobriety checkpoints. These efforts have been successful due to the continued teamwork among Authority Police and Operations personnel.

This same teamwork drives the Authority's Traffic Safety Committee, headed by the Chief of Police, Chief Engineer and Director of Operations. The committee provides leadership of Authority efforts to help ensure safe roadways for Maryland's citizens and visitors.

E-ZPass® Maryland

The Maryland Transportation Authority is a member of the *E-ZPass*® Group, which continues to develop a seamless electronic-toll-collection system throughout the northeastern United States. *E-ZPass* Maryland has grown to include more than 800,000 active transponders and has reduced significantly typical, peak-hour congestion at Maryland toll plazas. Customers from *E-ZPass* Group agencies can pay tolls electronically in Maryland. As more motorists use *E-ZPass*, convenience will increase; traffic congestion in and around toll-plaza areas will decrease; and engine-idling time will be reduced, resulting in reduced vehicle emissions. For additional information about the *E-ZPass* Maryland program and its standard, commuter and business plans, visit www.ezpassmd.com.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

The Authority continues to use ITS technology to improve safety and reduce congestion through enhanced incident detection and response, while informing motorists of real-time roadway and travel conditions and alternative routes. The Authority is an active partner in the Coordinated Highways Action Response Team (CHART). Through a series of variable-message signs and highway-advisory-radio messages, the CHART system advises motorists of traffic conditions along major routes and suggests alternatives to avoid delays and congestion. This information, as well as real-time traffic images are available on CHART's website at www.traffic.md.gov.

Your Toll Dollars At Work

Fast Facts

Construction Dates

June 1980 - November 1985

Cost

\$750 million

Location

Interstate 95 from the southern Baltimore City limit (Caton Avenue) to the northern Baltimore City limit, including the 1.5-mile eight-lane tunnel and I-395 into downtown Baltimore

Toll Rates

Commuter discount with valid Maryland-issued *E-ZPass*: up to 80-percent savings per trip
2 axles: \$2
3 axles: \$6
4 axles: \$9
5 axles: \$12
6 axles: \$15

Annual Traffic

43.4 million vehicles

Contact Us

For more information about the Maryland Transportation Authority, please call the Division of Communications at 410-537-1017, or, toll-free, at 1-866-713-1596.

E-mail: mdta@mdta.maryland.gov, or visit us at www.mdta.maryland.gov



The Authority reminds its customers to stay alert and exercise caution when traveling through workzones, toll plazas and around police vehicles.



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Authority

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